

## Message Text

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DEFENSE

CINCLANT

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UNCLAS REYKJAVIK 1388

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MARR IC

SUBJECT: IDF RETENTION NEGOTIATIONS: MEDIA COMMENT

1. SUMMARY. IN WEEKEND MEDIA COMMENT AND COVERAGE AFTER DEPARTURE FROM ICELAND OF US NEGOTIATING TEAM NOON NOV 16, PRIME MINISTER IN INTERVIEW ON RADIO THAT EVENING RESTATED HIS POSITION AS BEING A RETURN TO THE 1949 SITUATION OF HAVING NO FOREIGN TROOPS IN PEACETIME. FOREIGN MINISTER DURING TV INTERVIEW SAME EVENING RECALLED COALITION AGREEMENT AND SAID US PROPOSED "INSIGNIFICANT REDUCTIONS" WHICH WERE "NOT ACCEPTABLE," BUT WHICH WOULD BE SUBMITTED TO CABINET AND ALTHING FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE NOV 19. THIS PESSIMISTIC STATEMENT CONTRASTS WITH HIS STATEMENT TO PRESS WHEN LAST SESSION OF NEGOTIATIONS ENDED NOV 15 TO EFFECT THAT TALKS WERE USEFUL AND THAT HE WOULD HAVE NOTHING FURTHER TO SAY. MEDIA COVERAGE OF UNDER SECRETARY PORTER'S SESSION WITH NEWSMEN MORNING NOV 16 WAS BY AND LARGE STRAIGHTFORWARD, BUT PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE'S THJODVILJINN BATHED COVERAGE IN WATERGATE INNUNENDO. END SUMMARY.

2. REYKJAVIK NEWSMEN HAVE HAD LITTLE OF SUBSTANCE TO WORK WITH  
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IN COVERING AND EVALUATING JOINT US/GOI TALKS ON FUTURE STATUS OF ICELAND DEFENSE FORCE NOV 13 AND 15. FOLLOWING FONMIN'S GUIDANCE, US SIDE MADE NO STATEMENT, REFERRING NEWSMEN IN-

STEAD TO FONMINISTRY. THROUGH FRIDAY ONLY MINISTRY STATEMENT WAS THAT TALKS HAD BEEN "USEFUL" AND WOULD BE CONTINUED.

3. FONMIN EINAR AGUSTSSON WAS, HOWEVER, INTERVIEWED AFTERNOON NOV 16 FOR SHOWING DURING THAT EVENING'S NEWSCAST. FONMIN'S NEGATIVE TONE CONTRASTED RATHER SHARPLY WITH GENERALLY OPTIMISTIC COMMENTS OF AMBASSADOR PORTER ON US-ICELANDIC RELATIONS IN GENERAL, WHICH IT PRECEDED BUT WHICH WAS RECORDED MORNING NOV 16. (AMBASSADOR PORTER DID NOT REFER TO SUBSTANCE OR TONE OF TALKS DURING INTERVIEW.) INTERVIEWEE ASKED FONMIN WHETHER TALKS WERE GOING TO BE KEPT "SECRET." FONMIN SAID HE WOULD REPORT ON TALKS TO CABINET AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MONDAY NOV 19. ASKED IF TALKS HAD DIMINISHED THE POSSIBILITY THAT GOI WOULD SUBMIT A BILL TO THE ALTHING LATE THIS WINTER FOR TERMINATION OF DEFENSE AGREEMENT, FONMIN SAID WITH EMPHASIS "NO," FAR FROM IT, THIS POSSIBILITY HAD NOT BEEN DIMINISHED. ASKED WHETHER US SIDE HAD MADE MANY PROPOSALS, FONMIN SAID YES, BUT THAT THESE WERE NOT ACCEPTABLE SO FAR. ASKED IF PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE, FONMIN RESPONDED NEGATIVELY. ASKED IF US HAD MADE PROPOSALS FOR REDUCTION, FONMIN SAID YES. PRESSED FURTHER AS TO WHETHER THESE PROPOSALS WERE FOR "INSIGNIFICANT REDUCTIONS," FONMIN REPLIED WITH EMPHASIS THAT THEY WERE, AND WERE NOT ACCEPTABLE. ASKED IF MEMBERSHIP IN NATO PROVIDED ENOUGH SECURITY FOR ICELAND WITHOUT ANY BILATERAL AGREEMENT, FONMIN SAID THERE SURELY IS NO PERFECT SECURITY SOLUTION CONSIDERING MODERERN MILITARY TECHNIQUES, WERE EVENTS TO OCCUR RAPIDLY, BUT AN ATTACK ON ONE NATO MEMBER, HE SAID, MEANT AN ATTACK ON ALL.

4. PRIMIN OLAFUR JOHANNESSEN WAS INTERVIEWED VERY BRIEFLY ON RADIO EVENING NOV 16. HE SAID HE HAD EXPLAINED THE COALITION POLICY TO AMBASSADOR PORTER AND TOLD HIM THAT GOI POSITION WAS TO RETURN TO THE SITUATION AS IT WAS IN 1949 WHEN ICELAND WAS A MEMBER OF NATO WITHOUT FOREIGN TROOPS ON HER SOIL. RADIO NEWSMEN WITH THIS AS INTRODUCTION THEN PRESENTED A HISTORICAL BACKGROUNDER ON POST-WWII YEARS IN ICELAND, INCLUDING SITUATION IN 1949, EMPHASIZING THAT GOVERNMENT LEADERS THEN IN FACT WERE INTENDING TO PROVIDE FACILITIES TO US.

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5. IN SPECIAL PROGRAM ON TV SAME EVENING THERE WAS A FILMED REPORT ON IDF BASE AND ITS ROLE, INCLUDING ROLE OF JET FIGHTERS, ASW AIRCRAFT, RADAR STATIONS AND GROUND FORCES. PRESENTATION WAS FAIR AND LINKED TO TALKS.

6. ASIDE FROM COVERAGE OF AMBASSADOR PORTER'S SESSION MORNING NOV 16 WITH NEWSMEN (SEE BELOW), ONLY OTHER MEDIA COVERAGE OR COMMENT WAS IN PROGRESSIVE PARTY'S TIMINN EDITORIAL SATURDAY. WRITTEN BY ASSOCIATE EDITOR TOMAS KARLSSON, IT SAID:

QUOTE TALKS ON THE REVIEW OF THE DEFENSE AGREEMENT WITH THE

US HAVE JUST BEEN COMPLETED IN REYKJAVIK. MR. 094534, HEAD OF THE US DELEGATION, SUBMITTED NEW PROPOSALS ON BEHALF OF THE US GOVERNMENT CONCERNING THE ARRANGMENT OF THE OPERATION NOW BEING CONDUCTED IN KEFLAVIK. NO OFFICIAL STATEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE YET ON THESE PROPOSALS. FOREIGN MINISTER AGUSTSSON HAS THESE PROPOSALS UNDER CONSIDERATION, AND WILL SUBMIT A REPORT TO THE ALTHING AND THE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE. QUOTE IT HAS BEEN DECIDED TO RESUME THE TALKS NEXT MONTH. QUOTE OLAFUR JOHANNESSEN DECLARED IN PARLIAMENT THIS WEEK THAT THE CABINET WOULD SUBMIT ITS PROPOSAL ON DEFENSE MATTERS BY THE END OF THIS SESSION OF PARLIAMENT. THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT IF THE FOREIGN MINISTER WERE UNSUCCESSFUL IN MAKING A REVIEW OF THE DEFENSE AGREEMENT WHICH IS ACCEPTABLE TO AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES, THE CABINET WOULD INTRODUCE A BILL TO THE PARLIAMENT ASKING FOR THE TERMINATION OF THE DEFENSE AGREEMENT. UNQUOTE.

7. REPORTERS TOOK VARYING APPROACHES TO AMBASSADOR PORTER'S 35-MINUTE SESSION WITH NEWSMEN MORNING NOV 16. IN NOON RADIO REPORT, ARNI GUNNARSSON STRESSED NEGOTIATOR'S BACKGROUND, THE SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH US TOOK TALKS IN REYKJAVIK, AND UNDER SECRETARY'S VIEW THAT ICELAND'S "IMPORTANCE" HAD NEITHER CHANGED NOR DIMISHED THROUGH THE YEARS. MORGUNBLADID, INDEPENDENCE PARTY, HEADLINED ITS REPORT "ALWAYS OPTIMISTIC WHEN NEGOTIATING WITH ICELANDERS." PAPER GAVE NEGOTIATOR'S BACKGROUND, STRESSED HIS STATEMENT THAT MBFR WOULD REQUIRE RECIPROCAL REDUCTIONS BY WARSAW PACT POWERS, AND STRESSED IMPORTANCE US ATTACHED TO TALKS WITH ICELAND. NEGOTIATOR IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT US HAD HAD RELATIONS WITH UNCLASSIFIED UNCLASSIFIED

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ICELAND FOR MANY YEARS, AND "IS ALWAYS OPTIMISTIC IN NEGOTIATIONS WITH ICELANDERS."

8. VISIR, INDEPENDENCE PARTY, SAID IN ITS STORY ON NEWS SESSION THAT TALKS HAD GIVEN REASONS TO CONTINUE EXCHANGES, PROBABLY IN DECEMBER. US GOAL, VISIR SAID, WAS "TO FIND A WAY WHICH IS ACCEPTABLE TO GOI AND AT SAME TIME FULFILLS THE NEEDS OF NATO."

9. ALTHYDUBLADID, SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC, FOUND LITTLE OF INTEREST IN NEWS SESSION OTHER THAN BAN ON TAPE RECORDERS DURING INTERVIEW AND SO NOTED ON PAGE ONE SATURDAY.

10. THJODVILJINN, PEOPLE'S ALLIANCE, INTERESTINGLY RUNS A FAIR PARAPHRASED TRANSCRIPT OF NEWS SESSION ON SUNDAY. TWO AUXILIARY STORIES, HOWEVER, ARE MORE TRUE TO PAPER'S GENERAL TONE. ONE SAYS THAT, FROM NEGOTIATOR'S POSITION, ONE MAY INFER THAT HE HAS THE SAME MORALITY AND ETHICS AS "NIXON AND HIS (WATERGATE) CRONIES." PAPER SAYS THAT "IF NIXON SHOULD LEAVE OFFICE," UNDER SECRETARY'S "POSITION ALSO WOULD BE JEO-

PARDIZED."

11. IN PAGE ONE AUZILIARY STORY THJODVILJINN REPORTS THAT ITS REPORTER WAS DENIED PERMISSION TO TAPE NEWS SESSION. "EVIDENTLY THE US GOVERNMENT FELT THE MICROPHONES IN THE DESKS AND FURNITURE OF THE CULTURAL CENTER (WHERE INTERVIEW HELD) SHOULD BE THE ONLY ONES IN USE," PAPER SAYS.

12. THERE ARE NO PAPERS IN ICELAND MONDAY MORNINGS; NEXT COMMENTS PRESUMABLY WILL FOLLOW FONMIN'S PRESENTATION TO CABINET AND FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE.  
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## Message Attributes

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